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DIRECTORATE OF
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Central Intelligence Bulletin

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*North Vietnam: Hanoi has mounted a full-blown effort to publicize its proposal for a cessation of the US bombing.

The campaign stresses Hanoi's willingness to talk with the US at an early date in exchange for a halt in the bombing, and has taken the form of press conferences by North Vietnamese diplomats and increased propaganda support from Communist countries in Europe.

For example, Hanoi's man in Paris, Mai Van Bo, reportedly told an interviewer on 17 January that North Vietnam was prepared to talk about "everything" and that such talks could begin within a few days, once Hanoi decided that the bombings had really stopped.

This interview, however, has not been authenticated by Hanoi--as was his earlier interview on the 16th. The later interview may not in all details, correctly reflect Hanoi's views. As reported, it goes well beyond previous North Vietnamese statements and would be a further indication that the Communists are trying hard to make their offer seem as attractive and reasonable as possible.

In addition to Bo's publicity efforts in Paris, the North Vietnamese consul in Rangoon called a press conference on 18 January to propagandize Trinh's statement. The Communists in Europe also seem to have taken the wraps off and are commenting favorably on the North Vietnamese proposal. Czechoslovakia published a Foreign Ministry declaration of support on the 17th and on the 18th the Soviet press called the Trinh statement a step toward "peaceful settlement of the Vietnam problem." [] 3.5(c)

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